**Instructor:**

**Telephone Numbers:**

**Email:**

**Texts:**

***Philosophy, History, and the True Middle School*** a Pearson Custom Textbook

***Rethink, Rebuild, Rebound, A Framework for Shared Responsibility and Accountability in Education*** by John D. Balls, A. Douglas Eury, and Jane C. King

***A Short Guide to Action Research*** by Andrew P. Johnson

**Description:**

This course is a study of middle school history, philosophy, and future endeavors. It also offers an application and examination of the tenets of developmentally responsive middle level education, motivation and management, teachers as leaders, teaming and exemplary middle level practices across the curriculum. This course includes a one hour capstone.

**Rationale:**

The purpose of this course is to provide school leaders an opportunity to study and reflect on significant issues, trends, theories, and/or practical problems in education according to the needs and interests of the student(s). The study will be grounded in the standards of the professional learned societies, INTASC, NBPTS, and the North Carolina State Board of Education.

**Specific Standards*:* NC Teaching Standards**

[Standard 1](http://www.learnnc.org/ncpts/2009-PTS/PTS1/01/)

Teachers demonstrate leadership.

[Standard 2](http://www.learnnc.org/ncpts/2009-PTS/PTS1/02/)

Teachers establish a respectful environment for a diverse population of students.

[Standard 3](http://www.learnnc.org/ncpts/2009-PTS/PTS1/03/)

Teachers know the content they teach.

[Standard 4](http://www.learnnc.org/ncpts/2009-PTS/PTS1/04/)

Teachers facilitate learning for their students.

[Standard 5](http://www.learnnc.org/ncpts/2009-PTS/PTS1/05/)

Teachers reflect on their practice.

**Course Objectives** As a result of course readings, activities, and assignments, students will:

* Gain an understanding of the philosophical tenets that are the foundation for education in the United States.
* Gain an understanding of the philosophical tenets that are the foundation of middle schools in the United States.
* Understand the dynamics of teaching at the middle level, including characteristics of middle level learners.
* Gain insight into the process of curriculum development at the middle level.
* Understand how to collect and analyze specific school data to determine a curricular need.
* Gain a preliminary understanding of the action research process and its uses.
* Understand how to frame appropriate action research questions for investigation.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students have the responsibility to know and observe the requirements of the Code of Student Conduct. This code forbids cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submissions of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic honesty.

**Attendance:**

Students are expected to be in class. Please remember that Gardner-Webb University maintains a 75% attendance policy. Students should realize that missing a class does not grant an exemption from any work, assignments, readings, etc. ***It is incumbent upon the student, not the professor, to be responsible for assignments, both those on the syllabus and any made in*** ***class.***

**Accommodations:**

If your learning or participation in this class might be affected in any way by a disability recognized under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you will need to do the following:

1. Register with the Noel Program for the Disabled at Gardner Webb University at (704) 406-4270
2. Educate me about your disability so that I can work with you and the Noel Program to arrange necessary accommodations. It is important that you take both of these steps no later than the first week of the semester.

**Grading Scale:**

**95-100 = A, excellent work with unique qualities**

**90-94 = A-, excellent, master-level work**

**87 –89 = B+, good, solid work; well thought-out**

**84-86 = B, solid work; good planning**

**80-83 = B-, solid work; evidence of planning**

**80-75 = C, passing, but below normal graduate work level**

**Below 75 = F, failing, unacceptable work**

**Learning Tasks:**

1. Interview a middle school historian. Write up your findings and present them in class. (Graded with General Report Rubric)

2. Choose a subject of your choice and research how the teaching of it has changed over the past 30 years. Write up your findings and present them in class. (Graded with General Report Rubric)

3. Interview the most effective middle school “team” you can find about what makes them an effective team. Share your findings with the class. (Graded with General Report Rubric)

4. Examine the EVAAS predictor data for your current students in Math. How many are appropriately placed? Research articles on the middle school achievement gap and present findings in class. (Graded with General Report Rubric)

5. Design a new middle school that will house 850 students based on all the components of an exemplary middle school. You should have a drawing of your school layout, schedules, curriculum, instructional models expected by the teachers, a two year faculty development plan, a school communication and saftey plan, and a way to assess your new school. Share with the class. (Graded with Project Rubric)

6. Draft Chapter 1 of your capstone and begin a working outline of Chapter 2. Submit on TaskStream for review. (Graded with Capstone Rubric)

7. Participate in all online activities as assigned by your instructor. (Graded by appropriate rubrics, depending on activities)

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Topic(s) and Web Links** | **Assignments/Readings Due** |
| 1 | Background of Education and Schools  Videos: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiLgzZAzSJU&feature=related>  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvI6ODUAMek&feature=watch_response_rev>  Link:  <http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/>  Introduce Capstone Process - brainstorm possible capstone topics | Readings: Schumann Chs. 1-3  Balls, Eury, and King Ch. 1 |
| 2 | History of Middle School  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/November2003/Article1/tabid/139/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/September2009/Article4/tabid/2015/Default.aspx>  Capstone Process: Chapter 1 | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 1  Johnson Ch. 3  Balls, Eury, and King Ch. 2  **Assignment: List of possible capstone topics due** |
| 3 | Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools  Links:  <http://www.turningpts.org/>  <http://www.ncmsa.net/Exemplary_Schools.pdf> | Readings: Johnson Ch. 4  Balls, Eury, and King. Ch. 3  <http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/publications/On_Target/middle_or_high/middle_or_high_2.pdf>  <http://www.ncmsa.net/ressum4.htm>  **Assignment: LT1 due** |
| 4 | Middle Level Teachers  Videos:  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A-ZVCjfWf8&feature=fvw>  Links:  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/May2008/Article1/tabid/1680/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 4  Schuman Ch. 4  Johnson Ch. 5  Balls, Eury, and King Ch. 5  <http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/about/twb/This_We_Believe_Exec_Summary.pdf> |
| 5 | Middle Level Students  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/January2008/Article1/tabid/1569/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/moya/PlanYourCelebration/PRResources/CuspCulture/tabid/1199/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 2  Schuman Ch. 11  Johnson Ch. 6 |
| 6 | Diversity in the Middle  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/November2007/Article1/tabid/1543/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/November2006/Article3/tabid/1093/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 3  Schuman Ch. 8  **Assignment: LT 2 due** |
| 7 | Society in the Middle  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/January2008/Article8/tabid/1579/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 5  Schuman Ch. 7 |
| 8 | Gender in the Middle  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/September2010/Article3/tabid/2256/Default.aspx>  Capstone Process: Chapter 2 | Readings: Schuman Ch. 5  Johnson Ch. 7  **Assignment: Post draft of Chapter 1 of capstone online. Post in appropriate discussion drop box so your classmates can provide feedback. Make sure to respond to at least two of your peers’ work.** |
| 9 | Race in the Middle  Links:  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/January2011/Article3/tabid/2312/Default.aspx>  Capstone Process: Chapter 3 | Readings: Schuman Ch. 6  Johnson Ch. 10  **Assignment: LT 3 due** |
| 10 | Structures of Middle Schools  Links: <http://www.turningpts.org/pdf/Structures.pdf> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 6  Schuman Ch. 12  Balls, Eury, and King Chs. 4 and 6 |
| 11 | Middle Level Curriculum  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/September2007/Article1/tabid/1496/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/September2006/Article1/tabid/1013/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 7  Schuman Ch. 9  **Assignment: Update class on progress on Chapters 1 and 2 of capstone** |
| 12 | Middle Level Instruction  Links:  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/March2007/Article1/tabid/1287/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/September2003/Article1/tabid/141/Default.aspx>  Capstone Process: Chapters 4 and 5 | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 8  Johnson Ch. 14  **Assignment: LT 4 due** |
| 13 | Middle Level Assessment  Links:  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/WebExclusive/Assessment/tabid/1120/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/March2006/Article7/tabid/722/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 9  Schuman Ch. 10  **Assignment: Post revised Chapter 1 and at least an outline of Chapter 2 in the appropriate drop box online so your classmates can provide feedback. Be sure to respond to at least two of your peers’ work.** |
| 14 | Planning for Teaching and Learning  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/January2009/Article1/tabid/1819/Default.aspx> | Readings: Pearson Custom Ch. 11  Johnson Ch. 15 |
| 15 | The Future of Middle Schools  Links: <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/May2010/Article4/tabid/2207/Default.aspx>  <http://www.amle.org/Publications/MiddleSchoolJournal/Articles/May2009/Article1/tabid/1928/Default.aspx> | Readings: Johnson Ch. 16  Balls, Eury, and King Ch. 7-9  **Assignment: LT 5 due** |

**Online Discussion Questions:**

Week One - Why do we educate? How do you define a “good” education?

Week Two - Why do we have middle schools? Should have educators pushed for this separation from other schools?

Week Three – What characteristics of an effective middle school does your school demonstrate? What are some changes that could be made to your school to make it more effective?

Week Four – Were you prepared to teach middle level students? What could your teacher preparation program have done differently to better prepare you?

Week Five – What is the most exciting thing about teaching middle level students? What is the most challenging?

Week Six – Which is better for students, inclusion or resource? What makes or breaks dealing with diverse students in the classroom?

Week Seven – Chapter 7 of Schuman explains several models of understanding multiculturalism. Which model are you most comfortable with? How do you think that strengthens your teaching? How do you think that weakens your teaching?

Week Eight – Do you think classes should be separated by gender? Why? Would you rather teach a class of girls or boys? Why?

Week Nine – Do you believe your students will grow up in a less racist society? Why or why not?

Week Ten – What structures are in place at your middle school? Have you learned about any other structures that might be more effective? Why or why not?

Week Eleven – What is curriculum? Who controls the curriculum in your classroom?

Week Twelve – Considering many educational reforms are business practices, can the aims of education be managed by the practices of business? Why or why not?

Week Thirteen – If education is all about excellence, then what is so bad about testing it?

Week Fourteen – Do you agree that it is the right of any society to reward certain skills and not others?

Week Fifteen – What does the future of middle school look like?

**Rubrics:**

# General Report Rubric

Top of Form

| **Levels/Criteria** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score/Level** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Context of and Purpose for Writing Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s). | Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work. | Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context). | Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions). | Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience). |  |
| Content Development | Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work. | Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work. | Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work. | Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work. |  |
| Control of Syntax and Mechanics | Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error free. | Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors. | Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors. | Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage. |  |
| Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose | Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth | Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved. | Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved. | Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.), so the intended purpose is not achieved. |  |
| Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally | Students use correctly all of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrate a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly three of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly two of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly one of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. |  |
| Conclusions | States a conclusion that is a logical extrapolation from the inquiry findings. | States a conclusion focused solely on the inquiry findings. The conclusion arises specifically from and responds specifically to the inquiry findings. | States a general conclusion that, because it is so general, also applies beyond the scope of the inquiry findings. | States an ambiguous, illogical, or unsupportable conclusion from inquiry findings. |  |

# Project Rubric

Top of Form

| **Levels/Criteria** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score/Level** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluate Information and its Sources Critically | Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position. | Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position. | Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa). | Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position. |  |
| Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose | Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth | Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved. | Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved. | Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.), so the intended purpose is not achieved. |  |
| Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally | Students use correctly all of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrate a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly three of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly two of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. | Students use correctly one of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information. |  |
| Connections to Experience Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge | Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden own points of view. | Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to illuminate concepts/ theories/ frameworks of fields of study. | Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than own. | Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to own interests. |  |
| Connections to Discipline Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives | Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | When prompted, presents examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. |  |
| Transfer Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations | Adapts and applies, independently, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways. | Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues. | Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues. | Uses, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation. |  |
| Integrated Communication | Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation)in ways that enhance meaning, making clear the interdependence of language and meaning, thought, and expression. | Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to explicitly connect content and form, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience. | Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a basic way what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form). | Fulfills the assignment(s) (i.e. to produce an essay, a poster, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, etc.) in an appropriate form. |  |
| Reflection and Self-Assessment Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts | Envisions a future self (and possibly makes plans that build on past experiences) that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts. | Evaluates changes in own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity and risk, deals with frustration, considers ethical frameworks). | Articulates strengths and challenges (within specific performances or events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness). | Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure. |  |
| Solving Problems | Not only develops a logical, consistent plan to solve problem, but recognizes consequences of solution and can articulate reason for choosing solution. | Having selected from among alternatives, develops a logical, consistent plan to solve the problem. | Considers and rejects less acceptable approaches to solving problem. | Only a single approach is considered and is used to solve the problem. |  |
| Control of Syntax and Mechanics | Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error free. | Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors. | Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors. | Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage. |  |

Capstone Rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Not Demonstrated**  value: 0 | **Developing**  value: 1 | **Proficient**  value: 2 | **Distinguished**  value: 3 | **Score/ Level** |
| Standard 1: Teacher Knowledge and Leadership | No evidence demonstrated. | Demonstrates an understanding of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for developing a collaborative environment. | Demonstrates evidence of the assumption of collaborative leadership within the context of classroom and school environments. | Demonstrates evidence of full implementation of a collaborative environment including internal and external communities as indicated on the capstone checklist. |  |
| Standard 2: Respectful Educational Environments | No evidence demonstrated. | Demonstrates an understanding of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for providing respectful, positive and productive educational environments. | Demonstrates facilitation of a respectful, positive, and productive educational environment within diverse populations. | Demonstrates evidence of sharing leadership in establishing respective, positive, and productive environments throughout multiple internal and external communities with emphasis on capstone checklist. |  |
| Standard 3: Content and Curriculum Expertise | No evidence demonstrated. | Demonstrates knowledge of the subjects taught and an understanding of curriculum theory and development. | Demonstrates the implementation of knowledge and understanding of curriculum theory on the engagement of students through the development of integrated, rigorous and relevant learning activities. | Demonstrates evidence of enhanced learning cultures within internal and external communities. |  |
| Standard 4: Student Learning | No evidence demonstrated. | Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of child development, adolescent development and cognitive development supported by theories of assessment and evaluation. | Demonstrates the implementation of learning activities that address child developmental needs that maximize student learning with an emphasis on critical reading, writing and thinking. | Demonstrates evidence of facilitation of enhanced student learning within the larger school context resulting from comprehensive assessment and evaluation. |  |
| Standard 5: Reflection | No evidence demonstrated. | Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of systematic, critical analysis of learning through reflective practice. | Demonstrates evidence of activities that embrace critical thinking, problem solving, and innovation through reflective practice. | Demonstrates the ability to create environments that support ongoing professional development resulting from reflective practice. |  |

**Online Discussion Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Below Expectations (F)** | **Developing**  **(C)** | **Proficient**  **(B)** | **Accomplished**  **(A)** |
| Postings:  may not all be made in time for others to read and respond  are rudimentary and superficial; there is no evidence of insight or analysis  contribute no new ideas, connections, or applications  may be completely off topic | Postings:  may not all be made in time for others to read and respond  are generally competent, but the actual information they deliver seems thin and commonplace  make limited, if any, connections, and those art often cast in the form of vague generalities  contain few, if any, new ideas or applications; often are a rehashing or summary of other comments | Postings:  are made in time for others to read and respond  deliver information that shows that thought, insight, and analysis have taken place  make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations, but the connections are not really clear or are too obvious  contain new ideas, connections, or applications, but they may lack depth and/or detail | Postings:  are made in time for others to read and respond  deliver information that is full of thought, insight, and analysis  make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations  contain rich and fully developed new ideas, connections, or applications |